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RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ MAR 0524  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE 3731  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE 2481  
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE 0692  
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL IMMEDIATE 2129  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 000767

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/06/2014

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SUBJECT: GOE PROTESTS ALLEGED INCURSION; GOC FIRES BACK

REF: QUITO 733

Classified By: PolOff Jarahn Hillsman, Reasons 1.4 (b&d)

11. (SBU) Summary: Foreign Minister Espinosa on March 29 announced that Ecuador had proof that Colombian military units entered Ecuador on March 22 in pursuit of two suspected FARC members. She said that the GOE would immediately send a diplomatic note protesting the incursion, and calling on Colombia to respect Ecuador's national sovereignty. Colombian Foreign Minister Fernando Araujo reportedly called Ecuador's position "hostile," while Colombian President Alvaro Uribe called for continued dialogue. Meanwhile, insecurity of Ecuadorians living along the border continues to be of national concern, with some human rights organizations calling for OAS intervention. End Summary.

GOE Protests Incursion; Claims to Have Proof

12. (SBU) Ecuadorian Foreign Minister Maria Fernanda Espinosa in a joint press conference with Defense Minister Lorena Escudero on March 29 stated that Ecuador had formally protested to the GOC an incursion by Colombian military units on March 22, saying the GOE had physical evidence of the violation. She said that the GOE supported continued dialogue on the issue, but called on Colombia to fulfill its obligations under the January 2006 security declaration signed by former Defense Minister Oswaldo Jarrin and his Colombian counterpart. Espinosa said that the GOE had sent a formal protest note to the Colombian government, expressing Ecuador's discontent and calling on the GOC to avoid such action in the future.

13. (SBU) Escudero said that the Ecuadorian military recovered a grenade used by the Colombian military in the home of one of the suspected FARC members. She said that her security forces also confirmed that the operation to capture the two suspected FARC members likely began in Colombia, but that Colombian forces entered Ecuador to apprehend them on March 22. Escudero reiterated that Ecuador would not be drawn into Colombia's internal conflict, and called on Colombia to better secure its side of the border.

Araujo Expresses Frustration Over GOE Tone

14. (SBU) Colombian Foreign Minister Fernando Araujo reportedly fired back on March 29, calling for Ecuador to show its proof of the alleged March 22 incursion. Araujo reportedly said that "we (the GOC) would really hope to find a friendlier attitude from the GOE toward Colombia, because

until now, while I have been Foreign Minister, I have only encountered permanent protests which I perceive as hostile." Colombian President Alvaro Uribe reportedly called on his foreign minister to encourage dialogue and communication with Ecuador.

#### Human Rights Call for OAS Intervention

¶5. (SBU) Secretary General of the Latin American Association for Human Rights Juan de Dios Parra also lamented the alleged March 22 Colombian military incursion, urging the GOE to send its protest also to the OAS. Parra noted that the "historic neglect" of border residents had left them vulnerable to regular and irregular Colombian incursions, and called for the immediate implementation of "Plan Ecuador" to improve residents' socioeconomic status and security.

#### Attack on Colombian Police Add to Perception

¶6. (SBU) An IOM representative working in northern Ecuador told Embassy officials on March 27 that Colombian police were ambushed by the FARC on March 27 on the Colombian side of the San Miguel International Bridge. Police officials reportedly fled into Ecuador where their injured received medical attention from the Ecuadorian military. The GOC later retrieved the wounded returning them to Colombia via helicopter.

¶7. (C) Comment: The GOE protest appears to be the end of this incident, but does not bode well for the first encounter between the foreign ministers (when it finally occurs). The GOE's next salvo will likely be its formal unveiling of its trumpeted "Plan Ecuador," a move designed in significant measure to portray Ecuador as victim of Plan Colombia.  
JEWELL